

AUSTRALIA: A slow-moving storm system brought soaking rains (10-25 mm or more) to winter crop areas of the southeast (South Australia, Victoria, and New South Wales). While staying above freezing, temperatures averaged about 1 degree C below normal, slowing vegetative development. Elsewhere in the east, dry, seasonably cool weather persisted in the winter grain areas of southeastern Queensland, necessitating additional rainfall as crops advance through reproduction. Dryness in coastal sugarcane plantations was favorable, however, for harvesting. In Western Australia, scattered, generally light showers (10 mm or less in most areas) kept topsoils moist, but frost and freezing temperatures restricted early winter grain and oilseed development. In New Zealand, drier weather (rainfall totaling 15 mm or less) brought some relief to agricultural districts hit hard by last week's storm.